

Study Committee on Adoption

Wednesday, May 13, 2015 10:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M.

Indiana Government Center South, Conference Room 4

Members present: Jane Bisbee, Chair; Gregg Ellis, Guardian ad Litem/Child Advocates, Marion County; Sharon Pierce, Villages; Judge Dana Kenworthy, Grant Superior Court 2; Judge Steven Galvin, Monroe Juvenile Court; Zachary Kester, adoptive father and adoption attorney; Karen Sauer, adoptive mother.

Guests present: Lindsey Craig, Parvonay Stover, Amy Kent, Angel Owens.

Commission staff present: Lindsey Craig, Governor's Office Family Policy Director; Parvonay Stover, DCS Legislative Director.

I. Welcome:

Jane Bisbee calls meeting to order. This is the sixth meeting of the Adoption Subsidy Committee, with one meeting remaining. This discussion will be about finalizing the recommendations and working through ideas for the final report. What are our specific recommendations and how do we move forward?

II. Approval of Minutes from March 11, 2015 Meeting

Jane Bisbee entertains motion to approve previous minutes. Sharon Pierce suggests the previous minutes be amended to include guests from the Dave Thomas Foundation. Motion made to approve minutes with correction, passes committee vote, and meeting minutes of March 11, 2015 approved.

III. Legislative Update, Parvonay Stover, DCS Legislative Director

Brief update on 2015 legislative session provided. DCS budget request of \$11M approved for state adoption subsidy for state fiscal years 2016-2017. DCS received additional \$7.5M to fund the hiring of family case managers and family case manager supervisors. Further reports on monies allocated to the Supreme Court, State Department of Health, Criminal Justice Institute, etc.

IV. Committee Discussion on Final Recommendations

A. Adoption Awareness Brochure – Brochure that provides information about both public and private adoptions. Possibly a joint brochure with agencies that have involvement in adoptions. Sharon moves for that to become one of the recommendations. Motion made, seconded, voted, motion carries.

- B. Social Media Campaign** - How can different entities promote adoption on a larger scale? Social media campaign is needed to increase adoption awareness to include faith-based initiatives, as well as public adoption initiatives, not just in November, but throughout the year.

Focus Areas

- Increasing adoption fairs at county level
- Encouraging all counties to participate in Orphan Sunday
- Stronger promotion of foster care month
- Strengthen partnership with Wendy's Wonderful Kids
- Increase number of Adoption Champions

Motion made (by statement of Sharon Pierce), seconded, voted, motion carries.

- C. DCS Paying for Fingerprints for DCS Adoptions** - Motion made, seconded, voted, motion carries.

- D. Adoption Advocacy Council** - Present our ideas to Commission on Children to see whether they would be interested in carrying on the work this committee has done. Possibly housing a sub-committee/task force within that Commission to be an ongoing entity (replica) of this committee. Motion made, seconded, voted, motion carries.

Focus Areas

- Assessing best-practice strategies for addressing barriers
- Data
- Code re-write
- Increase ability to obtain birth certificate, not delayed registration of birth

V. Continuation of Commitment to Post-Adoption Services

Currently DCS provides post-adoption services to families who have adopted, regardless of whether that adoption occurred through DCS, or privately. Committee recommends that Indiana continue to provide and support these services.

***During the next meeting committee will review the recommendations and finalize the report.*

VI. Future Commission Meeting Date

- June 10, 2015 – 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.